

NATURAL HISTORY SERIES

THE LION

AND OTHER STORIES.



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THE LION.

OOK at the Lion. He is so strong and so bold, that he has been called the "King of Beasts."

And yet the great roaring Lion is nothing more than a giant cat!

His teeth, his paws, his eyes, and his ears are made quite like those of a cat. He makes the same use of them, too; for he watches in the same still, patient manner that a cat does; and then springs upon his prey, and seizes it with his teeth and claws. (See Picture No. 2.)

The Lion has a long shaggy mane. The Lioness is covered with a glossy coat of short, thick hair, but has no mane.

The Lions may be called the giants, and

the real pussies the dwarfs, among animals of the cat kind.

The home of the largest Lions is far away in the wild mountains and great plains of Africa.

The Lion lives also in Asia, but he is not so large and strong as the Lion of Africa.

In the north of Africa the Arabs live in constant dread of the Lion.

The Arabs, you know, dwell in tents; and when a number of tents are put up near each other, they form an Arab village.

Often, at night, a Lion will come and attack one of these tent villages.

His home is in the mountains, perhaps twenty or thirty miles away. A nice, well-kept home it is, under the thickest cover of bushes he can find.

There he lies snugly all day, and sleeps with his wife and little ones.

But when the sun is going down, he leaves his den and goes forth to hunt.

Thirty or forty miles are only a nice walk for him! Down he marches from his mountain home.

When he comes near the Arab tents, he steals along on his softly cushioned feet, that make no sound as he treads.

When all is still, his terrible voice is heard, and in the silence of the night it sounds like thunder!

The dogs bark, and the horses, oxen, and camels rush about in wild terror. The men light fires all around, and toss about flaming torches, to try to scare him away.

He minds them very little, and the thunder of his voice drowns every other sound. He walks straight on to the place where the cattle are, and in a few minutes three or four oxen fall beneath his terrible paws.

It is said that sometimes he will drive one or two oxen home before him all the way to his den, where his wife and cubs are waiting for their food. (See Picture No. 3.)

In this way, by these nightly visits, the Arabs sometimes have their whole flocks and herds carried off.

Although the lion seldom leaves his den during the day, yet when he is hungry he may be found roaming over the plains.

There, large herds of wild asses and antelopes go trooping along.

They scent the lion at a great distance; and when they hear his voice, they scour away over the desert like the wind.

In their terror, some of them come near the place where the lion lies hid. Then he couches, his eye glares, and with one bound he springs on his prey.





THE TRAVELER AND THE LION.



TRAVELER in South Africa once set out on a journey. When far from home he had to cross a wide plain, where he saw a Lion at a distance. The Lion saw him at the same time, and began slowly to follow him.

When the Traveler walked fast, the Lion walked fast; and when he stopped, the Lion stopped! The man saw that the Lion meant to follow him until dark, and then spring upon him.

He was not able to run away from the Lion, for the Lion could run faster than he could. So he thought of a plan to cheat him.

He came to a high cliff, below which was a deep hollow. Creeping down, he hid behind a rock, where the Lion could not see

him. Then taking a stick which he found among the rocks, he put on it his coat and his hat, so as to make them look like a man.

He then held the stick above the rock behind which he was hid.

Soon the Lion came creeping slyly along. The moment he saw the coat and the hat, he made a sudden spring at them. He bounded right over the place where the man lay, and falling down among the rocks, was killed!

The Traveler was saved, and ere long he reached his own home.



THE LIONESS AND HER CUBS.



HE Lioness is much smaller than the Lion, and her form is more slender and graceful.

The home of the Lioness, in a wild state, is generally under some deep cover, and all around is watched with the greatest care. Woe to the intruder, whether man or beast, that unwarily comes near the Lioness in her den!

An English officer in India was one morning out on horseback, armed with a rifle. He was suddenly surprised by a large male Lion, which bounded from the thick jungle, at the distance of only a few yards.

The officer instantly fired; the shot took effect, and the Lion fell dead at his feet.

No sooner was this formidable foe thus disposed of, than a second, equally terrible, made its appearance. It was a Lioness.

The officer fired again, and wounded her so dangerously, that she retreated to the jungle.

The officer followed, and soon traced her to her den. There the brave mother tried to defend her young ones—but in vain. Another shot from the officer's rifle soon stretched her dead.

The cubs were only a few days old. These the officer and his servants brought away with them.

By the assistance of a goat, which was prevailed on to act as foster-mother to the royal pair, the officer succeeded in rearing them till they were old enough and strong enough to bear the voyage to England, where they were kept for many years.







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